

Lauchli Sentenced To 2 1/2-Year Term

A convicted gun runner and former leader of the Illinois "Minutemen" was sentenced today to 2 1/2 years in prison today in U.S. District Court.

He is Richard Lauchli Jr., 38, of Collinsville.

Judge Omer Poos denied Lauchli's plea for probation. He said Lauchli had been convicted twice before of violating the federal firearms act.

Defense Attorney Robert Oxtoby said Lauchli was a man who knows the law and feels he is acting accordingly.

"I have no intention of violating the law. This is the country I love," Lauchli said.

Lauchli was arrested in 1964 on a charge of illegal sale and manufacture of firearms. He was arrested by special agents near Clinton with a stockpile of \$17,000 in weapons.

Prior convictions included possession of automatic weapons and taking bazookas from a government arsenal in Indiana. He received a \$100 fine for the first offense and 18-months probation for the second.

"You ought to have it driven home to you that you can't take the law into your own hands and use it as you see fit," Judge Poos told Lauchli as he pronounced sentence.

Judge Poos continued Lauchli on \$20,000 bond and gave him 10 days in which to file notice of appeal.

Judge Poos said he was basing his action also on information from the probation investigation that showed Lauchli since his conviction Nov. 4 had been engaged in attempted arms dealing using an assumed name.

Lauchli was advertising for parts through a post office box in the St. Louis area, Judge Poos said.

Jury Finds Lauschli Guilty In Arms Case

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A predominantly male U.S. District Court jury deliberated almost five hours Thursday and found Richard Lauchli Jr. of Collinsville guilty on two indictments charging him with illegal sale, shipment and manufacture of guns.

The jury found Lauchli guilty on 13 of 15 counts in two indictments. District Judge Omer Poos granted 15 days to the defense to file motion for a new trial.

The case went to the jury at the conclusion of Lauchli's testimony in the four-day trial. Lauchli, 38, said he sold 103 dismantled machine guns and other weapons to two undercover U.S. Treasury agents who posed as military representatives of an unnamed Latin American country.

He testified the gun parts, purchased from a Provo, Utah, scrap dealer, were rusty and unserviceable and did not constitute weapons as defined under the National Firearms Act.

Asst. U.S. Atty. Leon Scroggins told the jury in closing arguments that Lauchli repaired the guns in his machine shop and test-fired some of

them for the two Treasury agents. Lauchli was arrested May 19 last year after he completed a deal for \$17,000 and turned over the stockpile of weapons to federal agents at a farm near Clinton.

He has been convicted twice before of violating the firearms act by illegally possessing automatic weapons and taking 23 bazookas from a government arsenal in Indiana.

Defense Atty. Robert Oxtoby of Springfield argued that Lauchli was entrapped by federal agents into selling the guns.

"He was told that some general needed guns for anti-Communist activities in some Latin American country or somewhere," Oxtoby said.

"Part of the defendant's nature is he doesn't like Communists," Oxtoby told the jury.

Lauchli once was a regional leader of the Illinois "Minutemen," an anti-Communist organization which conducted guerrilla warfare maneuvers.

A government witness testified earlier in the trial that Lauchli said he had supplied guns to Fidel Castro, anti-Castro forces, the "Minutemen" and the John Birch Society.